

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 12441 011321Z

ACTION CU-04

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TO USIA WASHDC

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AMCONSUL FLORENCE

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FOR IMV AND IEU

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: PROPOSED YOUNG AMERICAN FILMMAKERS SEMINAR IN FOLIGNO  
AND OTHER UMBRIAN TOWNS

REF: A. USIA CM-841, 6/19/75; B. IMV/R OM 6/23/77

1. POST HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY (MFA), LOCAL AUTHORITIES TOWN OF FOLIGNO AND OTHER UMBRIAN CITIES AND NOTED MOVIE DIRECTOR MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI FOR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING PROGRAM OF TALKS AND FILM SHOWINGS BY YOUNG AMERICAN FILMMAKERS FOR PUBLIC IN UMBRIAN AREA. CONCEPT BEHIND AMBITIOUS PROJECT IS TO CREATE WHAT WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME MAJOR ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL IN UMBRIAN REGION TO COMPLEMENT HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL SPOLETO FESTIVAL (SPOLETO IS ALSO IN UMBRIA) WHERE ALMOST ALL THE ARTS ARE REPRESENTED EXCEPT FILM. PROPOSED YOUNG AMERICAN FILMMAKERS PROGRAM WOULD LAUNCH THIS NEW FESTIVAL IN SPRING OF FALL, 1978. INVISIONED IS 7-10 DAY PROGRAM OF FILM SHOWING AND TALKS BY YOUNG, STILL UNESTABLISHED AMERICAN FILMMAKERS, INCLUDING UNIVERSITY FILM STUDENTS, RECENT GRADUATES AND NEW DIRECTORS. POST THINKS PROPOSAL HAS CONSIDERABLE MERIT? YOUNG FILMMAKERS PROGRAM COULD HAVE HIGH IMPACT AND OUR INVOLVEMENT THIS STATE IN DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL FESTIVAL COULD PAY IMPORTANT LONG-TERM DIVIDENDS.

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PAGE 02 ROME 12441 011321Z

2. ACCORDINGLY WISH EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES FOR OUR ASSISTANCE IDENTIFYING PROMISING YOUNG DIRECTORS, ESTIMATING COSTS AND DETERMINING LOGISTICS OF POSSIBLE COLLABORATION. AS FIRST STEP, REQUEST AGENCY'S HELP IN LOCATING POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS. IMV WILL DOUBTLESSLY BE ABLE IDENTIFY NUMEROUS YOUNG FILMMAKERS BASED ON ITS OWN PAST PROGRAMS TO FIND AND ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT

THIS TALENT (SEE REF. A). ALSO REQUEST AGENCY CONTACT LEADING FILM TEACHERS AND CRITICS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF COUNTRY (ESPECIALLY LOS ANGELES AND NEW YORK, OF COURSE) FOR FURTHER IDEAS. ANTONIONI HAS INDICATED THAT DIRECTOR FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA, A PERSONAL FRIEND, WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY SUPPORT THIS PROJECT; HE TOO SHOULD BE QUERIED FOR NAMES. WOULD LIKE EVENTUALLY TO HAVE LIST 50 OR MORE FILMMAKERS FROM WHICH PERHAPS TEN PARTICIPANTS WOULD ULTIMATELY BE CHOSEN FOR UMBRIAN PROGRAM. ITALIANS WOULD VISIT US PROBABLY LATE THIS YEAR TO REVIEW FILMS, MEET DIRECTORS AND, PERHAPS IN CONSULTATION WITH AMERICAN EXPERTS ON INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE, MAKE FINAL SELECTION.

3. AT SAME TIME THIS SEARCH IS ON FOR YOUNG AMERICAN FILM TALENT, POST WILL EXPLORE WAYS TO FINANCE PROJECT. COSTS WILL INVOLVE INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL FOR TEN DIRECTORS TO ITALY, EXPENSES HERE FOR UP TO TEN DAYS AND POSSIBLE HONORARIA. ADMITTEDLY OPTIMISTIC SCENARIO WOULD HAVE MFA OBTAINING FREE OR REDUCED-FARE PLANE TICKETS FOR PARTICIPANTS AND ITALIANS COVERING ROOM AND BOARD EXPENSES IN UMBRIA. ALSO, IF YOUNG DIRECTOR RECEIVE FESTIVAL INVITATION DIRECTLY FROM ITALIAN ORGANIZERS, HONORARIA WOULD PERHAPS NOT BE EXPECTED. ALL THIS REMAINS TO BE SEEN, HOWEVER, AND WILL BE SUBJECT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS HERE.

4. DESIRE HAVE AT LEAST PRELIMINARY LIST OF FILMMAKERS BY MID-SEPTEMBER TO REVIEW WITH FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS, BEFORE THEY UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 ROME 12441 011321Z

VISIT U.S. (IN SEPARATE MESSAGE, WE ARE ORDERING STUDENT FILMMAKERS FILM COLLECTION WHICH WE WILL SIMILARLY REVIEW TOGETHER WITH THE ITALIANS IN SEPTEMBER.) ADVISE SOONEST NAME OF OFFICER WHO WILL HANDLE THIS PROJECT FROM WASHINGTON END. ALSO ADVISE NAMES, ADDRESSES, TELEPHONE NUMBER OF PRINCIPAL AMERICAN FILM EXPERTS WITH WHOM YOU IN CONTACT; AT EARLY STAGE, POST AND ITALIAN ORGANIZERS WILL WANT TO BEGIN DIRECT CORRESPONDENCE WITH THEM.

5. WHILE CAUTION NECESSARY AS PROJECT DEVELOPS, OUR INTEREST IS BASED ON (1) ATTENTION AND RESOURCES ANTONIONI CAN COMMAND FROM POSITION AT TOP RANK OF ITALIAN DIRECTORS; (2) HEAVY POLITICAL AND SOCIAL FREIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN CINEMA; (3) ABILITY OF VERY YOUNG ITALIAN DIRECTORS TO GET BACKING FOR MAJOR COMMERCIAL FILMS. ALL WESTERN FILM CRITICS AGREE THAT ITALIAN CINEMA IS MOST POLITICAL IN EUROPE. ALTHOUGH OFTEN PORTRAYED AS LEFT-DOMINATED, IT STILL LEAVES ROOM FOR ROSSELLINI TO MAKE LAUDATORY FILM BIO OF DE GASPERI (TWO YEAR AGO), ROSI TO ROAM FREELY IN COMMENTARIES ON STATE ENTERPRISES, NEAPOLITAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, PCI CONSPIRACIES, ET. BERTOLUCCI, PASOLINI AND OTHERS HAVE MADE STRONG POLITICAL FILMS WHILE IN THEIR TWENTIES. IN ITALY, THEY PROBABLY DESERVE OUR ATTENTION

AS MUCH AS MANY EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS DO. THIS PROJECT WOULD  
PROVIDE GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR POST ASSOCIATION IN COMMON ENTER-  
PRISE WITH TOP CURRENT DIRECTORS (ANTONIONI WOULD INVOLVE OTHERS)  
AND BUDDING FILMMAKERS. POINT OF INSERTION INTO PROJECT  
WOULD BE THE CRITICAL ONE: SELECTION OF POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS.  
APPRECIATE SUPPORT, RECOMMENDATIONS.SHIRLEY

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